

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 14024 271213Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /059 W

----- 014512

R 271140Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9664

INFO AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 14024

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, IT, MT

SUBJECT: ONE ITALIAN VIEW ON MALTA

REF: A. VALLETTA 0956

B. PARIS 23967

1. A MIDDLE-RANKING, REASONABLY INFORMED MFA OFFICIAL HAS SHARED WITH EMBOFF FOLLOWING VIEWS ON MALTA AND MINTOFF.

2. DESPITE HIS GYRATIONS AND PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS, MINTOFF HAS SO FAR GOT PRACTICALLY NOWHERE WITH HIS QUEST FOR NEUTRALITY AND ECONOMIC GUARANTEES. ITALY, FOR ONE, HAS NOT YET RESPONDED, AND THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT MINTOFF DOES NOT REALLY HAVE THE LIBYAN CARD TO PLAY. OUR CONTACT CONFIRMED REFTELS REGARDING DESTREMAU'S VISIT TO VALLETTA, SHOWING US REPORT FROM ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN PARIS. FRENCH, ACCORDING THAT REPORT, MAY WAIT UNTIL AFTER MALTESE ELECTIONS TO GIVE A VAGUE BUT NOT ENTIRELY NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO MINTOFF. FRENCH CAN SEE MERIT IN SOME KIND OF A NEUTRALITY "GUARANTEE", ARE WARY OF THE OPEN-ENDED FINANCIAL COMMITMENT INVOLVED IN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 14024 271213Z

MINTOFF'S DRAFT TREATY, AND ARE LOOKING AROUND FOR

SOME EVENTUAL FORMAT LESS RIGID AND BINDING THAN A TREATY. SOURCE FULLY INFORMED AS TO USG ATTITUDE.

3. MINTOFF GIVES LOWER PRIORITY TO THE NEUTRALITY GUARANTEE THAN TO GUARANTEES OF "INITIAL ECONOMIC VIABILITY" FOR MALTA. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE IS NO RPT NO GOOD EVIDENCE THAT MINTOFF HOPES TO EXTRACT FINANCIAL OR OTHER ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM WESTERN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES THROUGH A THREAT (IMPLIED OR DIRECT) OF MOVING MALTA FROM NEUTRALITY INTO, SAY, THE RUSSIAN OR ARAB CAMP. ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH MINTOFF, THOUGH, SIGHED OUR SOURCE.

4. EXPRESSING SIMILAR PUZZLEMENT WITH THE "MADMAN" QADHAFI, OUR CONTACT NOTED THAT DESPITE MINTOFF'S BLANDISHMENTS AND PUBLIC STANCE, THE LIBYANS HAVE BEEN PLAYING VERY HARD TO GET. IT IS HARD TO ENVISAGE WHAT LIBYA WOULD RECEIVE, OTHER THAN BILLS, OUT OF A CLOSER TIE TO MALTA. THE BULK OF THE MALTESE ARE NOT VERY FOND OF LIBYANS AND WOULD NOT WELCOME A LARGE LIBYAN PRESENCE ON THE ISLAND. WHATEVER PRESTIGE OR SECURITY ADVANTAGE QADHAFI MIGHT SEE IN A DEAL WITH MINTOFFSEEMS HARDLY WORTH THE CANDLE FOR LIBYA. ANYWAY, QADHAFI HAS HIS MIND ON OTHER PROBLEMS AT THE MOMENT.

5. THE MFA OFFICER HAD NO PARTICULAR CONCERN THAT THE RUSSIANS MIGHT TRY TO TURN THE MALTESE SITUATION TO THEIR ADVANTAGE, BY, SAY, SEEKING ACCESS TO VALLETTA'S PORT FACILITIES. SUCH A GAMBIT WOULD NOT ONLY BE CONTRARY TO THE SPIRIT OF CSCE BUT WOULD BE DANGEROUSLY DESTABILIZING IN THE MED AND THERFOR NOT COST BENEFICIAL TO THE USSR, ACCORDING TO THIS OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT.

6. FINALLY, HE FELT THAT MINTOFF IS CERTAIN TO GET A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY IN THE SEPTEMBER ELECTION. THE OPPOSITION NATIONALIST PARTY IS LISTLESS AND HAS NO PARTY ORGANIZATION. MINTOFF, FOR ALL HIS FAULTS, HAS HITHERTO BROUGHT A MEASURE OF RELATIVE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 14024 271213Z

PROSPERITY TO THE ISLAND, EVEN IF PARTLY EXTORTED FROM WESTERN POWERS. LAST, HE IS PERFECTLY WILLING TO BUY PARLIAMENTARIAN WITNESS THE WAY HIS OPPOSITION SUDDENLY WILTED WHEN HE DECIDED MALTA SHOULD BE A REPUBLIC.

7. COMMENT: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ROME, FOREGOING ASSESSMENT APPEARS TO HAVE SOME VALIDITY EVEN THOUGH, OF COURSE, IT IGNORES

AND THEREFOR FAILS TO PROVIDE ANY EVIDENT RATIONALE FOR THE
BEHIND-THE-SCENE ACTIVISM OF MFA SECGEN MANZINI AND OF AMB.
DERIN IN MALTA ON MINTOFF'S BEHALF.BEAUDRY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NEUTRALISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME14024
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760327-0584
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760812/aaaaajvy.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 VALLETTA 956, 76 PARIS 23967
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <24 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ONE ITALIAN VIEW ON MALTA
TAGS: PFOR, IT, MT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006